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INFO RUEHTH/AMEMBASSY ATHENS 7814
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL 2129
RUEHDA/AMCONSUL ADANA 1655
RUEHBS/AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS 5744
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RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO 5487
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 2117
RUEUITH/DET 1 39LG ANKARA TU
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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2007

In Today's Papers

General Buyukanit Visits the US

All papers report Turkish General Staff (TGS) chief General Yasar Buyukanit met with Vice President Cheney and National Security Advisor Stephen Hadley in Washington yesterday. At a reception given in his honor, Buyukanit warned "those dreaming of dividing Turkey" that there were "dynamic forces protecting the country," and that "no one could divide the country." Buyukanit maintained that no one could carry Turkey to a point other than one determined by the constitution. With regard to a possible adoption of an Armenian genocide resolution by the US Congress, Buyukanit said "I have worked with the US military for 50 years, and I can say that if such a thing happens, we will be hurt. Esteemed commanders of the American armed forces will share our feelings." Buyukanit stressed if the resolution passes, "We will be hurt, but I believe reasonable American citizens will refrain from hurting Turkey." The General also said the terror of the outlawed PKK in Turkey and northern Iraq and Iraq's integrity were not separate issues, warning the Iraqi Kurds on the matter. On his first US visit as the head of the Turkish military, Buyukanit will meet with General Peter Pace and Under Secretary for Defense Eric Edelman on Thursday.

Erdogan Says Article 301 to be Changed

All papers report Prime Minister Erdogan told the press before departing for Turkmenistan on Wednesday that Article 301 of the Turkish Penal Code, which makes it a crime to "insult Turkishness" will be amended next week. "Some NGOs have submitted a proposal for changing Article 301 rather than scrapping it. We are now working to block the prosecutors from filing lawsuits even on applications coming from third persons," Erdogan said. state as well as the TGS." TAYAD members will appear before court on April 19.

On the other hand, Cumhuriyet reports 34 international NGOs as well as organizations such as International Journalists Association, International Journalists Federation, and International Publishers Organization have sent a letter to the Turkish government, calling

for the abolishment of Article 301 rather than the amendment of it.

Show TV Series 'Kurtlar Vadisi' (Valley of the Wolves) Might be Stopped

All papers report that, following the receipt of 14,000 complains from the public, the chairman of RTUK (Radio TV High Commission), Zahid Akman met with the Show TV director Saner Ayar to discuss a possible ban on broadcasting the TV series 'Kurtlar Vadisi-Terror'. Public concern was mainly that the series sets a bad example for youth as it contains too much violence. Show TV administration stressed that they are looking for ways to stop broadcasting the mentioned program without facing any legal charges from the producers of the series.

Renewed Investigation against Roj TV

Sabah, Vatan and others: A Danish Prosecutor Karsten Hjort decided to renew the investigation into Roj TV. Turkey had several initiatives in the past for the closure of the TV channel, claiming it was the mouthpiece of the PKK. The Danish opposition claimed that the current decision was result of pressures exerted by the US and Turkey.

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Hak-Par Officials Given Prison Terms for Speaking Kurdish

Zaman, Cumhuriyet, Radikal and others: A court yesterday sentenced 13 top members of the pro-Kurdish party for Rights and Freedoms (Hak-Par), up to one year in prison for speaking Kurdish in the party's first general congress three years ago and sending Kurdish-language invitations to participants and several state officials. The court also decided to file a complaint with the Court of Appeals Chief Public Prosecutor's Office to outlaw the party under the Political Parties Law.

Editorial Commentary on North Korea, Iran

Fikret Ertan observes in the Islamist-intellectual Zaman: "The nuclear programs of both Iran and North Korea are among the most important issues that the international community currently faces. Whether a settlement can be found to the Iranian issue still remains to be seen. But at least the North Korean nuclear program issue has been resolved diplomatically via an interim agreement. The agreement signed in Beijing, demonstrates a change in the Bush administration's 'no talks policy' for North Korea. Managing to change the nature of the North Korean crisis and bring it under diplomatic management provides hope and an example for the settlement of the Iranian issue as well. In this respect, Secretary Rice has already stated that effective international cooperation which achieved the agreement was a message to Iran."

Sami Kohen comments in the mainstream Milliyet: "The agreement with North Korea meets the primary expectations of the US as well as the other signatories. With the help of this development, North Korea will be able to overcome the isolation and be treated as part of the international community. Even though North Korea will be able to get away with its already produced 10 atomic bombs, the overall appraisers like defying the world when it comes to defending their nuclear power ideal. But there are some differences between Iran and North Korea.

First of all, it is richer than North Korea and has the capacity to endure outside sanctions. The fact of the matter is that unlike in the case of North Korea, there is no unified bloc against Iran either. Nevertheless, the North Korean example is about diplomacy prevailing over force, and it certainly is worth trying over and over again."

TV Highlights

NTV, 6.00 A.M.

Domestic News

- Prime Minister Ehud Olmert has arrived in Ankara as the official guest of his Turkish counterpart Erdogan. On Thursday, Olmert is to meet Erdogan, President Sezer, Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul, Defense Minister Vecdi Gonul, and Turkish chambers union chairman

Rifat Hisarciklioglu. Reportedly, Israel said Erdogan's accusation of Israel of raising tensions with a controversial road building work near the al-Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem has been "unfair and untimely."

- The Istanbul Municipality has rejected a proposal coming from Eyup Municipality for changing the name of the famous "Pierre Loti Hill."

- The Turkish Parliament is expected to adopt a bill allowing foreign doctors to work in Turkey.

- Spain has accepted Turkey's request for the extradition of Turkish drug smuggler Nejat Das.

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International News

- The White House expressed confidence Iran is behind the deadly bombs in Iraq, despite disagreeing comments from the US Joint Chiefs chairman General Pace.

- In a new audiotape released on Tuesday, al-Qaeda's second-in-command Ayman al-Zawahiri called for Muslim unity, threatening US allies in the region and warning of an escalating threat from the Taliban in Afgterror operatio candidate, was sworn in just minutes after his election ictory was announced.

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